

CLAIMS

1. A method for resolving an address request in a computer system comprising the steps of:
 - receiving a name at a first server with a request for an address corresponding to that name;
 - comparing the name with a database of names to detect any matching name in the database; and
 - if no matching name is detected, sending a referral response in answer to the request.
2. A method according to claim 1 in which the first server is a domain name server and the referral is to a second domain name server.
3. Apparatus for resolving an address request in a computer system comprising:
 - means for receiving a name at a first server with a request for an address corresponding to that name;
 - means for comparing the name with a database of names to detect any matching name in the database; and
 - means for sending a referral in answer to the request if no matching name is detected.
4. Apparatus according to claim 3 in which the first server is a domain name server and the referral is to a second domain name server.
5. A method for resolving an unknown address request in a computer system comprising the steps of:
 - receiving a referred request from a user;
 - performing a sequence of tests on the request; and
 - sending a synthesized address response to the user.
6. A method according to claim 5 in which the sequences of tests including the step of determining the type of the request.
7. A method according to claim 5 or 6 in which the

sequence of tests including determining whether the start of a request matches a known string of characters.

8. A method according to claims 5, 6 or 7 in which the request is a name to address resolution request.

9. A method according to claim 5, 6, 7 or 8 in which the synthesized response comprises an Internet Protocol address.

10. Apparatus for resolving an unknown address request in a computer system comprising means for receiving a referral request from a user;

means for performing a sequence of tests in the request; and

means for sending a synthesized address response to the user.

11. A method for resolving an unknown address request in an computer system substantially as herein described.

12. Apparatus for resolving an unknown address request in a computer system substantially as herein described.